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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/507,443	04/18/2006	Dirk Weber	10191/4006	6716

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EXAMINER	
ROCCA, JOSEPH M	
ART UNIT	**PAPER NUMBER**
3616	

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/507,443	WEBER ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	JOSEPH ROCCA	3616	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *17 December 2007*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *11-23* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *11-23* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 11-13 and 17-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Normann et al. (U.S. 6,828,905 B2) in view of Brambilla et al. (U.S. 6,758,495 B2). Normann discloses a method and system for protecting a vehicle occupant in the occurrence of a potentially dangerous situation comprising:

A pressure sensor for continuously monitoring the pressure of at least one tire and an analysis unit for analyzing the pressure of the at least one tire to determine whether a value of a loss of the pressure of the at least one tire exceeds a threshold value, wherein exceeding the threshold value corresponds to a sudden pressure loss occurring in a tire blowout (Col. 8, Lines 14-62), wherein Normann further notes that a dangerous situation may occur when the sudden pressure loss occurs in a vehicle while the vehicle is being driven (Col. 1, Lines 50-52).

Normann doesn't specifically disclose triggering activation of at least one system that is assigned to a seat of the vehicle occupant and is configured to be reversibly activated, if the value of the loss of the tire pressure of at least one tire exceeds a threshold value, wherein exceeding of the threshold value corresponds to a sudden pressure loss occurring in a tire blowout.

Nevertheless, it is known to protect drivers to protect drivers from potentially dangerous situations by reversibly tensioning seat belts. Brambilla discloses triggering activation of at least one system that is assigned to a seat of the vehicle occupant and is configured to be reversibly activated in the event of a dangerous situation (Abstract, Col. 5, Lines 44-60), wherein the pretensioner is reversible once the dangerous situation has ended (Col. 6, Line 60 to Col. 7, Lines 1-6).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Normann to include a triggering control unit for triggering activation of the at least one system that is assigned to the seat of the vehicle occupant and is configured to be reversibly activated, if the value of the loss of the tire pressure of the at least one tire exceeds the threshold value, wherein exceeding of the threshold value corresponds to a sudden pressure loss occurring in a tire blowout, in view of the teachings of Brambilla, so as to better protect occupants in the event that a dangerous driving condition due to a sudden tire pressure loss occurs, thereby reducing the possibility of injury.

With respect to claims 12 and 18, Normann as modified in view of Brambilla, as discussed above, further teaches that the triggering control unit activates a tensioning mechanism of a reversible belt tensioning system.

3. Claims 13-16 and 19-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Normann et al. (U.S. 6,828,905 B2) as modified in view of Brambilla et al. (U.S. 6,758,495 B2) as applied to claims 11-12 and 17-18 above, and further in view of Stopczynski (U.S. 6,519,519 B1). The combination of Normann as modified in

view of Brambilla does not specifically further teach a crash evaluation circuit, wherein a signal indicating the exceeding of the threshold value is sent to the crash evaluation circuit for use as a parameter indicating an existence of imminent possibility of an accident. Nevertheless, the use of crash evaluation circuits is old and well known to use a crash evaluation circuit and an indication of tire pressure as a parameter indicating an existence of imminent possibility of an accident. Stopczynski discloses the use of a sensor complex (Element 18) that detects tire pressure as a parameter indicating an existence of imminent possibility of an accident using a threat assessor (Element 16), wherein the threat assessor (Element 16), the threat assessor and/or in combination with the sensor complex (Element 18), may be broadly interpreted as a crash evaluation circuit, and further discloses adjusting triggering thresholds (Col. 5, Lines 25-31) for vehicular safety devices including belt tensioner that is reversibly actuated.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have further modified Normann as modified in view of Brambilla, such that a crash evaluation circuit was utilized, wherein a signal indicating the exceeding of the threshold value is sent to the crash evaluation circuit for use as a parameter indicating an existence of imminent possibility of an accident, in view of Stopczynski, so improve the safety of the vehicle by using other parameters in addition to simply the tire pressure, so that additional factors may be used in determining the safety of vehicle occupants, thereby improving the analysis of a potential impact, so as to better protect the occupants.

Regarding claim 13, Normann as modified in view of Brambilla and as further modified by Stopczynski teaches a method wherein if activation of the system is triggered, an existence of an imminent possibility of an accident is assumed and an appropriate information is transmitted to at least one triggering unit for adjusting a triggering threshold for triggering at least one restraint device.

With respect to claim 14, Normann as modified in view of Brambilla and further modified by Stopczynski teaches a method wherein if activation of the system is triggered, an existence of an imminent possibility of an accident is assumed and an appropriate information is transmitted to at least one triggering unit for adjusting a triggering threshold for triggering at least one restraint device.

As to claims 15 and 16, Normann as modified in view of Brambilla and as further modified by Stopczynski teaches a method wherein the appropriate information is fed into a vehicle information network and is made available to a plurality of triggering units for adjusting at least one of parameters and triggering thresholds for triggering a plurality of restraint devices.

With respect to claim 20, Normann as modified in view of Brambilla and as further modified by Stopczynski, teaches the system above further comprising a crash evaluation circuit, wherein a signal indicating the exceeding of the threshold value is sent to the crash evaluation circuit for use as a parameter indicating an existence of imminent possibility of an accident.

Regarding claim 21, Normann as modified in view of Brambilla and further modified by Stopczynski, teaches the system above further comprising a signal indicating the exceeding of the threshold value is fed into a vehicle information network.

With respect to claims 22 and 23, Normann as modified in view of Brambilla and further modified by Stopczynski, teaches the system above wherein a signal indicating the exceeding of the threshold value is fed into a vehicle information network.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 11-23 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JOSEPH ROCCA whose telephone number is (571)272-5191. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paul Dickson can be reached on 571-272-6669. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Joseph Rocca/
Examiner, Art Unit 3616

RUTH ILAN
PRIMARY EXAMINER

1/16/08